

Washington State Department of Transportation
Multi-Agency Permitting Team

Multi-Agency

TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENT
NATURAL RESOURCES

Working for Washington

Permitting Team for Transportation

We, the Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Transportation, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and King County do believe that by working together, in the same location on the same projects, permit and regulatory decision-making for state transportation projects will be improved for all.

Accordingly, we commit to launching this first Multi-Agency Permitting Team (MAP Team) at the Department of Ecology's Northwest Regional Office on this 14th day of October, 2003; and, in so doing, further commit to empowering this first MAP Team with the responsibility to uphold and embrace the public call for:

- ✓ Governmental cooperation, collaboration, creativity, and team work;
- ✓ Streamlined permitting and regulatory decision-making;
- ✓ Effective environmental protection and impact mitigation; and
- ✓ Efficient delivery of transportation improvement projects that balance and are accountable to community, economic, and environmental values.

With our signatures, we enthusiastically declare "open for business" this first MAP Team, pledge our full support, and commit to continuing to work together to achieve the transportation and environmental protection goals that are vitally important to all citizens of the State of Washington.

	10/14/03
Doug MacDonald, Secretary, Washington State Department of Transportation	Date
	10/14/03
Linda Hoffman, Interim-Director, Washington State Department of Ecology	Date
	10/14/03
Jeff Koenigs, Director, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife	Date
	1/05/04
Col. Debra M. Lewis, District Engineer, Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Acting pursuant to its streamlining activities under Transportation Equity Act for 21 st Century)	Date
	11-2-04
Stephanie Warden, Director, King County Department of Development and Environmental Services	Date



Who can I contact for additional information?

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Washington State Department of Transportation Multi-Agency Permitting Team

What is the Multi-Agency Permitting Team (MAP Team)?

In November of 2003, three Washington State agencies and one Federal agency joined forces in a new approach to permitting – the Multi-Agency Permitting (MAP Team). In 2004, these agencies were joined in this effort by King County. The MAP Team is a pilot program, co-locating these five agencies in a common office, with one primary goal – making permit decisions for a selected set of Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) projects. In the process of doing so, the MAP Team identifies potential permitting risks, develops cooperative processes and solutions, and provides a unified package of environmental information to the project manager early enough to make a difference. This process can reduce environmental impacts and help keep the projects on schedule.

Composition of the MAP Team

The team is comprised of the following five organizations and nine disciplines:

- ❖ Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)
 - Wetland Specialist
 - Permit Coordinator
 - Stormwater/Water Quality Engineer
- ❖ Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
 - Habitat Biologist
 - Habitat Engineer
- ❖ Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
 - Program Manager
 - Environmental Coordinator
- ❖ United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)
 - Section 404/10 Project Manager
- ❖ King County Department of Development and Environmental Services (KC DDES)
 - Project Manager

Why do we need the MAP Team?

Washington State is faced with some of the worst traffic problems in the nation. At the same time, Washington ports are among the busiest in the nation, tying the transportation system into the local and national economy, and placing heavy demands on Washington’s highway system to move freight. Lastly, Washington State is home for several endangered species and Washington citizens place a high value on environmental protection. The combination of these factors frequently puts environmental permitting in the critical path for transportation project delivery.

Logistics/Accountability

The MAP Team is located in the North West Region, Department of Ecology Building near Seattle, Washington, which places the team close to the majority of their projects. Team members are internally accountable to each other, as well as reporting regularly to a steering committee comprised of individual supervisors from each agency. Performance measures and business results are presented to the directors of all five agencies every quarter. The team is funded and led by WSDOT.

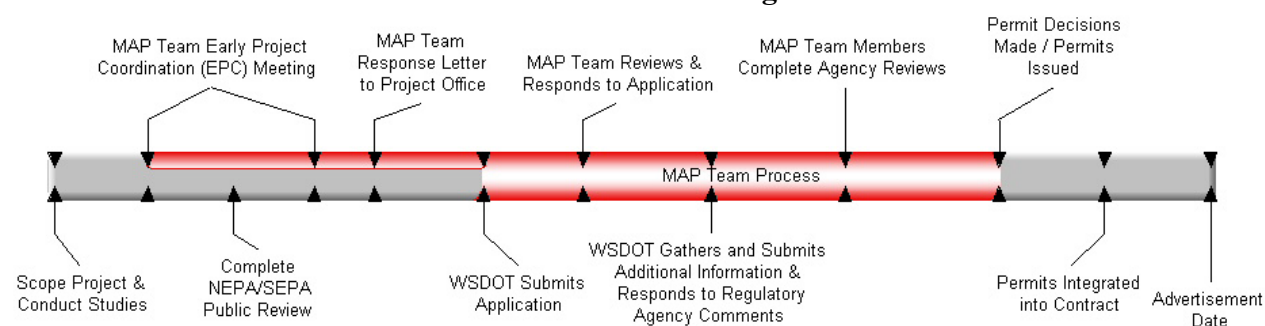
Permits typically processed through the MAP Team include:

- ❖ Clean Water Act – Section 404 Nationwide & Individual Permit (Corps)
- ❖ Rivers and Harbors Act – Section 10 Permit (Corps)
- ❖ Clean Water Act – Section 401 Certification (Ecology)
- ❖ Clean Water Act – Section 402 NPDES Construction Individual Permit (Ecology)
- ❖ Costal Zone Management Act – Consistency Determination (Ecology)
- ❖ Shoreline Management Act – Review (Ecology)
- ❖ Hydraulic Project Approval (WDFW)
- ❖ Shoreline Management Act – Permit or Authorization (KC DDES)
- ❖ Growth Management Act – Clearing/Critical Areas Permit (KC DDES)
- ❖ Planned Agency Utility Exception (KC DDES)

MAP Team Projects

Almost all of the current 45 MAP Team projects are located within WSDOT’s Northwest Region. This area encompasses King, Snohomish, Skagit, Island, and Whatcom Counties where a majority of the population of Washington State live and work. Nine projects have successfully been permitted using the MAP Team Process. The MAP Team goal is to permit the projects at least 60 to 90 days prior to the project contract advertisement.

MAP Team Environmental Permitting Process Timeline



New and Improved Business Practices

The MAP Team provides a natural forum for identifying, debating, and resolving conflicts that arise during project review, design, and permitting. The cooperative attitude of team members, combined with encouragement from each agency, contributes to a “can-do”, problem-solving environment. The following processes were created to help define the MAP Team business model.

- ❖ Innovative business practices:
 - Defining WSDOT and regulatory agency expectations for a complete application (Checklist)
 - Early Project Coordination meetings and response letters are used to identify project risks and opportunities
 - Creating and implementing the first Washington State Interagency Design Build Permitting Process
 - Working to test the new On-Line - Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA)
<http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/jarpaworksheet/DesktopDefault.aspx>
- ❖ Improvement opportunities within each agency:
 - Wetland Mitigation Site Selection, Design, and Long Term Site Management and Monitoring
 - Stormwater Design Guidance
 - Providing Guidance on Documentation of Alternatives Analysis
 - Policy Improvement in Fish Passage and Habitat Design

Performance Measurements

The MAP Team investment is being tracked through eight performance measures in three categories: time, cost, and changes in business practices. A brief summary of these measures follows:

- ❖ Time
 - Permit processes are to be completed approximately 60-90 days prior to contract advertisement. The MAP Team so far has completed permits on average 82 days prior to the contract advertisement.
 - Process permits quickly and accurately – On average permits are authorized approximately 45 days from the time of a complete application. (Individual Section 404 permits are taking longer)
 - Work out conflicts and reduce the chance of delays. To date no MAP Team permits have resulted in a project delay.
- ❖ Cost
 - The cost of the MAP Team averages approximately \$45-\$50k a month. WSDOT feels that this amount is less than overall costs of the “normal” permitting process, including project delays, revisiting permit requirements, etc. However, there are not enough quantitative data at this time to prove that point.
- ❖ Changes in Business Practices
 - Initiating Change - Use customer feedback to identify problems and to initiate change.
 - Resolving Conflict - Work proactively to identify conflicts early and to resolve them quickly.
 - Meeting Customer Expectations – Communicate regularly with various levels of member agency organizations to gauge the effectiveness of the MAP Team business approach.

The MAP Team model is based on developing a foundation of trust and open communication between a diverse, highly capable group of decision makers from five agencies of government. This formula provides an accountable, transparent process that is able to identify risks and opportunities, and address and avoid conflicts early, thereby achieving permit decisions in a predictable and timely manner. Based on the initial feedback from this pilot project, the MAP Team business model appears to be a good investment for the future in the world of transportation improvement projects.